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CONTENTS

THE CENTRAL MESSAGE OF CHRISTIANITY
by Rev. Charles E. Park, D. D.

CRISIS AND HOPE
by Dr. Robert Ulich, Ph. D.

THE EASTER PROMISE
by Felix Arnold

YOUTH THOUGHTS ON EASTER
by Charles DeB. Allen

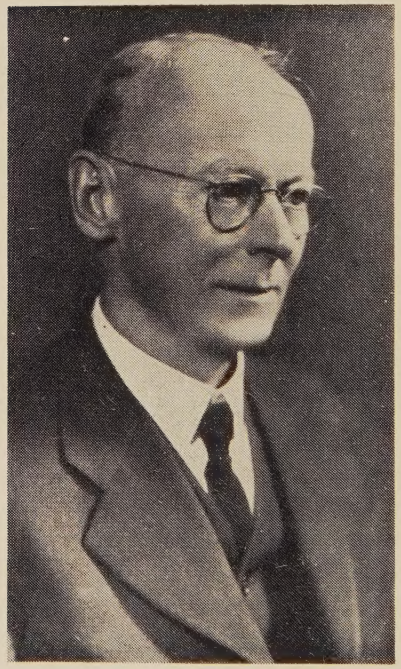
THE PAEAN OF VICTORY (Cover)
by Rev. W. Waldemar Argow, Th. D.

31455

Purpose: To preserve and strengthen the Christian essence of Unitarianism

The Fatherhood of God.
The Brotherhood of Man.
The Leadership of Jesus.
Salvation by Character.
The Progress of Mankind,
Onward and Upward forever

ANNOUNCEMENT



REV. CHARLES E. PARK, D.D.

The Editorial Board of the Unitarian Christian Fellowship and its present Editor, Rev. Heinz Rettig, announce with pleasure that the Rev. Charles E. Park, D. D., Minister Emeritus of the First Church in Boston has consented to serve The Unitarian Christian Quarterly in the capacity of Editor-in-Chief beginning with the May issue.

Rev. Heinz Rettig will serve as Managing-Editor and the Rev. Carl Seaward will assume the responsibility of Circulation Manager.

THE CENTRAL MESSAGE OF CHRISTIANITY

From the Book, "Creative Faith"
(Copies available at the First Church)
by
Rev. Charles E. Park, D. D.
Minister Emeritus, First Church of Boston

cts 16:30—"Sirs, what must I do to be saved?"

When the jailer of Philippi asked that uestion of Paul and Silas, he betrayed is gratitude to them for what they had ust done. It is a touching story. The ailer had secured his prisoners in the tocks all safe and comfortable for the ight, and had locked the prison doors, nd had retired to his own well-earned epose. In the middle of the night an arthquake had suddenly rattled the doors ll open and broken the stocks and set the risoners free. The jailer rushing out in larm had supposed that, of course, his harges were all escaped, and he was a ined man. The prospect of disgrace was ore than he could endure. He was just bout to kill himself, when Paul shouted ut, through the dust and confusion. Do yself no injury, for we are all here. To is boundless relief, the poor jailer found at this was quite true. None of his prisners had escaped. Paul had saved him om needless suicide, and thinking to imself that he would like to show his ratitude to that man — yes, he would ke to be that kind of man — he had rown himself down at Paul's feet and id, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved? ou call yourselves Christians. I know othing about Christianity, but I want to e what you are. I want to be like you. Tell e, then, what is the central truth or fact out Christianity? What is the chief ualification for membership in your hristian Brotherhood? What is it that nstitutes initiation into this Christian ystery?"

That is what we call a leading question. goes directly to the point. It calls for an nswer equally leading, equally direct, succinct, adequate. And we very much wish that such an answer might have been returned. But to tell the truth, we are disappointed in the answer. It seems to us inadequate, not to say ambiguous. I venture to say that as we read the story, we come to the jailer's question with a little feeling of tense and breathless expectancy —Now, Paul, here is your chance, a direct, straightforward question. What is your answer? And I venture to say that when we read the answer—Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ—we feel just a little twitch of disappointment. For although the answer may be true enough, it requires further explanation. It requires thought. It leads to more questions and answers. It is just the beginning of a lengthy discussion. And meanwhile we feel that somehow Paul has lost his chance to set forth the central truth or fact of Christianity in a single memorable sentence.

Of course this disappointment of ours, assuming that we do feel it, is the product of our own later point of view. So far as Paul was concerned there was nothing disappointing about the answer he gave. It was not ambiguous and it was quite adequate. The Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, crucified and risen, the Holy Spirit incarnate in our human flesh—to Paul that was the sum and substance of Christianity. There was nothing more. And to believe in him as such was to be a Christian, and it was to be saved, because that act of faith worked in the heart of the believer its magic result of salvation. Therefore, argued Paul, if you want to be like me, believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. That is not only the vital answer. That is the whole answer. What more is there to say?

However, times have changed. And while there are many of us who still see in Paul's answer the same adequacy that Paul himself saw in it, there are some of us who are only baffled and postponed by that answer.

Almost every system of thought the world has ever seen has had a definite character. It has recognized a definite condition. It has labored to secure a definite remedy, and it has recommended a definite method. Just think of a few systems of religious thought and see how true it is that they have character, that they are definite, that each has a central message or remedy to offer the world. The Brahmin believes that the soul is constantly reborn to the miseries and futilities of earthly life—that the great aim of the soul is to escape from this Wheel of Existence, and that the way of escape lies in cultivating the soul's power until it can establish identity with God. The Buddhist believes that human misery arises from the frustration of desire and recommends that the way to escape this misery is to overcome and suppress all desire. The Confucian believes that men are hero worshippers, whose strongest motive is to imitate their hero—their king—and teaches that the king of a country should be an enlightened man, and then everybody will imitate him and we will all live happily ever after. Take it in our own times: the Shaker believes that human life is a hopeless mistake—that it ought not to be, and recommends that we all take the vow of celibacy and pass quietly out of existence as a race of beings. The Friend believes that man's only true guidance is the voice of God speaking directly to him, and recommends that man shall do all things in obedience to the inner light of God's presence in his own conscience.

In so many instances we find it possible to reduce an entire system of thought to a central core or formula. When we try to do that with our Christianity, we find that Paul's answer to the jailer helps only one kind of Christian—those who like Paul have chosen to ignore what Christ himself thought or believed, and to make Christ the central truth or formula or a religion they call Christianity. But there is another kind of Christian—those who seek to recapture what Christ believed, what he taught, the religion he practiced in his own private capacity, the faith he held, the hope he pursued, the motive that swayed him, the objective that he served —and make this religion genius of the purest quality, a man in whom spirit had really overcome the flesh, and whose principle had conquered impulse and held it subject. They see him as one who made of his life the most that it is possible for man to make, and who lived in his few years the richest, deepest, happiest, and noblest human existence this earth has ever seen. And they turn to him just as the jailer turned to Paul, and say—Master, we want to be like you. Tell us your secret. What must we do to be saved, as you are saved?

To answer that question, What was the central formula of Christ's own religion, leads us into one of the most fascinating studies we could undertake—the effort to know Christ in his human character, as a man among men—the effort to penetrate his mind and share with him his deepest and most formative convictions. Usually a man's deepest convictions are the ones that show in his outer bearing. They are the ones that determine his prevailing mood and deportment in the world. If then we can form a mental picture of Jesus the man as he moved about in his little world, we may be able to argue back from these visible traits and surmise what must have been his inward thoughts and convictions. Needless to say we shall do so in the utmost reverence and love.

Right there we make a discovery. We

ll ourselves that we shall study him in everence and love. Why? Because the rst thing we see in him is something that wakens reverence and arouses love. He as a serene man. His nature was strong, nd poised, and balanced, and well ordered. He was essentially calm and confident. There was no fear about him. He as not afraid of life and therefore there as no violence or passion about him. He as not afraid of his fellow men and erefore there was no hatred towards his ellow men. He lived secure in a friendly orld and he was a friend to everybody in e world. Even when the world crucified im, they were only doing what he foreaw they would do, and as he hung on his ross he prayed that they might be forven. A serene man whose serenity arose om the sense of being perfectly safe and rfectly secure in God's world—and ade him sympathetic, helpful, friendly, ving and beloved. Inevitably we think of im with reverence and affection.

Another fact we see in him—he was a usy man. His days were crowded full of ccupation. There was nothing idle or imless or haphazard about his life. He ad a very definite task and a very abrbing one, and he gives the distinct imression of one who knew that his time as short, and who was therefore working nder pressure. This impression of conant industry not only finds corroboration his words—I must work the works of im that sent me, while it is day: behold, e night cometh, when no man can work —it also finds corroboration in little hints at we get of his physical weariness. He ters the boat to cross over to the other de, and instantly falls asleep upon a ushion in the stern. He had a definite ork to do, and he gave himself to that ork without stint or measure. I must be bout my father's business. These are the wo most conspicuous facts about him—is serenity and his industry. He felt perfectly secure, and he had something to do —a sense of safety and a purpose in life. What inner qualities of mind and heart would these two outward facts seem to promise? No great difficulty faces us here. The serenity of a man's ways can arise only from one source—his faith that his world and his life and his fellow men, his present and his future, are all securely held in the hands of a kindly, all-powerful intelligence. When faith declares that this world and all it contains are in the keeping of God, and that God is love, then there is no choice for that man but serenity, quietness, confidence, a sense of ultimate security, a feeling that no matter what befalls him, he is perfectly safe.

And so in like manner with Christ's industry. Something to do must begin with some one to give us something to do. A life of service must find its roots in the heart's conviction that God is a God of purpose—that he is engaged upon a divine enterprise, that he is working out in this world a plan of his own, and asks his human children to share that plan with him and help in its fulfillment. And when faith declares that God is a purposeful God, a God of ordered and intelligent activity who is even now in process of of fulfilling a creative design in this world of ours, and in this human life, then there is no choice for any loyal son of God but personal partnership in that purpose and personal industry as a fellow laborer with God. Arguing backward from those qualities we discover in Christ's outward character, we may confidently discover in corresponding qualities in his innermost thought and faith. His habitual serenity and sense of security indicate his faith in a benevolent God, a Father in Heaven, who has this world of ours and these lives of ours in his loving charge. And his habitual industry betokens his faith in a God of Purpose who is in process of fulfilling a holy design for his world.

We are bound to say then that the central core of Christ's personal religion, the central formula in the religion that he himself cherished and practiced, was his faith in a loving and a purposeful God. Now, if our definition of Christianity is the religion that Christ himself practiced reproduced in our minds and hearts, and if we were to go to Christ, as the jailer went to Paul, and say, Dear Master, I want to be like you; tell me the secret of your living; what must I do to be saved, as you are saved, from these fears and terrors, from this aimlessness and bewilderment—the answer would be perfectly plain: Believe in God your Father in Heaven. Believe in his divine love, in his holy Purpose. At once a sense of safety will come to you, to displace the terror and dismay. At once a new meaning and a new value will overspread your life, to open the door of opportunity, to set before you a personal task, and to challenge all your power and all your generosity.

Almost two thousand years have passed since that faith was first given to the world, but it has not grown old, and it has not become obsolete. There is a vitality in it that defies the wear and tear of the ages. For every year of these intervening nineteen centuries has piled up its testimony to our human need of that faith. We have done our best to get along without God. We have tried our hardest to prove that he does not exist, that his love is a fable, that his intelligent control of this world is a childish fancy—and every attempt has brought us back to the same terrifying discovery—that our life without God's love to bless it and God's purpose to guide it is like our world without the rays of the sun—frozen up tight in merciless cold and darkness. That testimony has increased with man's increasing knowledge. And with every step of enlightenment man has taken throughout these centuries, man's need of God has kept even pace. It is a need that our minds cannot explain, and our hearts cannot outgrow.

And as we look about us upon our modern conditions of life this very day, there is nothing we see so plainly as our need of faith—our need of Christ's conviction of a loving purposeful God. What is there we crave more than a sense of security? What is there that would bring more downright comfort and peace to our terrified hearts than the promise that we are ultimately safe—that whatever may befall us of loss or danger or suffering, our lives in the end are secure from destruction? Our present anxieties on that score are the saddest thing in our times. We do not know what may befall us in another month, in another year. We tremble lest our children may suffer and our grandchildren may starve. If only Christ could tell us that the spirit of God is a kindly spirit, that it is not our Father's will that one of these little ones should perish, that the divine spirit finds its dwelling place in human hearts, and does its work in human minds and motives, that there is nothing to fear, but that under the compulsion of that indwelling spirit of divine love and divine sympathy, human beings will find the answer to their problems and will discover the way to live in this world happily and safely and securely—if only Christ could stamp the impress of that faith upon our hearts, what a burden of anxiety would roll away. With what impregnable serenity we should go back to our perplexities, and smile into other people's faces and whisper to ourselves—After all, it is a friendly world, because God is a God of love and his spirit is in me, and in my fellow men, and there is nothing to fear!

What is there we need today more than a sense of purpose—something to do, some result to aim at—some ambition to fulfill? They tell us that the new economy is going

o give us all an unprecedented leisure. We are to be liberated from this breathless struggle for bread and butter, for bodily comfort, for the bare necessities of life. There is an abundance of life's necessities in the world—more than we need ten times over. We are going to discover a better way to distribute them so that all shall enjoy more spare time—time for friendship and self-cultivation, time for personal interests and discoveries, time for the enrichment of life through the creation of beauty and power. Man doth not live by bread alone, and we are going to have a reasonable chance to acquire some of those commodities besides bread that are necessary to man's life. But without a sense of that higher purpose in life — what are we going to do with this gift of spare time? If Christ could give us his quickening faith in God as a God of Purpose, who is laboring to make a Kingdom of Heaven out of our human world, who has a personal task for each humblest one of us, and is waiting for us to see that life is more than just eating and sleeping and getting and spending, waiting for us to recognize our personal share in his constructive service, and undertake that share with joy and generosity — if Christ could give us that sense of partnership in a divine purpose, what novelties of beauty and meaning we should discover in life, and what surprises of happiness and worthwhileness would fill our empty hearts.

That is precisely what Christ is saying to us—offering to us. That is the central message of his religion and of our Christianity—that our Father in Heaven is a God of love and purpose. There is the yoke of Christ that is easy, and the burden that is light. There is the allegiance that blessed his days upon earth and glorified his life. It can do the same for us, and there is nothing we pray for so earnestly. Turn ye to that stronghold, ye Prisoners of Hope—a divine Reality, in whose love our little lives find their safety and their serenity; in whose purpose our little services are called forth to be beautified with meaning and value—to be crowned, in his good time, with success.

ONE SOLITARY LIFE

Here is a man who was born in an obscure village, the child of a peasant woman. He grew up in another obscure village. He worked in a carpenter shop until he was thirty, and then for three years he was an itinerant preacher. He never wrote a book. He never held an office. He never owned a home. He never had a family. He never went to college. He never put his foot inside a big city. He never travelled two hundered miles from the place where he was born. He never did one of the things that usually accompany greatness. He had no credentials but himself. He had nothing to do with this world except the naked power of his divine manhood. While still a young man, the tide of popular opinion turned against him. His friends ran away. One of them denied him. He was turned over to his enemies. He went through the mockery of a trial. He was nailed to a cross between two thieves. His executioners gambled for the only piece of property he had on earth while he was dying—and that was his coat. When he was dead he was taken down and laid in a borrowed grave through the pity of a friend.

Nineteen wide centuries have come and gone and today he is the centerpiece of the human race and the leader of the column of progress.

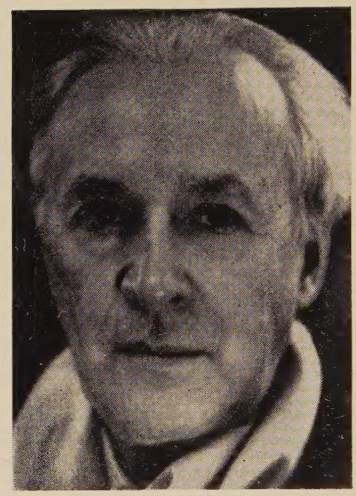
—(Contributed)

Crisis and Hope

From the book, "Crisis and Hope in American Education"

by

Dr. Robert Ulich, Ph. D.
Harvard University, Graduation School of Education



DR. ROBERT ULICH, Ph. D.

In our Western civilization religion has always claimed to be the ultimate source and goal of education of both the young and adults, and to provide the daily life of man with universal aspirations. It is difficult to judge the degree to which this claim has been materialized, because mere external factors such as church membership do not indicate a person's actual participation in the religious tradition. In addition, for centuries the controversy has been going on as to what degree organized religion is a promoter of, or an obstacle to, the development of a free and humane civilization. Some great men, such as Auguste Comte, have expressed one belief in one period of their lives and the contrary in another, according to their changing criteria of evaluation.

From a sociologically descriptive point of view the picture seems to be this:

In England, and to a degree in the United States, liberal and socialist ideas as well as progressive politics have never developed such a hostile attitude toward the ecclesiastical tradition as has been the case in the Continental countries. The reason is that in the Anglo-Saxon countries the rationalist movement of the eighteenth century managed somehow to avoid the open split with the Judeo-Christian tradition; the attitude of Common Sense, as represented by John Locke in England and Benjamin Franklin in America, preferred logical inconsistency to jeopardizing the supposed moral and religious security of the people by philosophical radicalism. Furthermore, the decentralization of cultural and political life allowed for the continual creation of new sects which gave to suppressed groups a feeling of belonging and a chance for discussing their hopes and ideas. Thus frustration and its companion, uncritical aggressiveness, were more successfully avoided than in France, Spain, Russia, Italy, and Germany.

But avoiding an issue is rarely a solution. If the issue is deeply rooted in human nature it runs with them who want to run away; when they think it is buried, it suddenly pops up.

In the United States the compromising conventionalism of earlier times, the separation of church and state, and the growth of pragmatic philosophies have brought about an amazing degree of indifference about religious matters, especially in Protestant circles. This now begins to bother even those who are not genuinely interested in organized religion. They feel that forces may profit from this indifference which they like even less than the institutional churches: cynicism about social values and family life, juvenile delinquency, gangsterism, and the Communist threat to the social order of democracy. On the other hand the Catholic Church in the

United States has developed more and more the well-known qualities of an *ecclesia militans*. They show especially in the struggle between the public and the denominational school systems and the political influence of Catholicism. Unfortunately, minority resentments enter into the picture and work both ways, from the top down and the bottom up.

In the Latin countries, perhaps excepting Spain, Catholicism among the majority of the educated people seems to be more a matter of custom and fear of an incalculable social void than of profound conviction; just as in certain Protestant circles one remains in the faith of the fathers much less because of a deeply felt urge than because of fear that "Everything may break down" if the churches are deserted.

To what extent Christianity is a cultural factor in the great mystery of the modern world, Russia, is difficult to judge. The Orthodox Church is now apparently tolerated, and priests may have had some influence in the fighting army. But has the Orthodox Church perhaps met the new Russia on a plane which has little universal value from the Christian point of view? Those who know Dostoevski need no further information about the tendency in Russian Christianity to identify the past and the future of "Holy Russia" with the will of God. Thus, it may not be too difficult to arrive at some sort of compromise between the religious past and the new government, which in addition to its missionary passion, displays more and more nationalist characteristics. But whatever it may be, certainly the meeting between Communism and the Orthodox Church will require a lot of rethinking on both sides, unless the Russian priests are happy to be just tolerated. The official party ideology, so far as we can see, has not yet made any concessions.

In the countries of Central Europe the Christian churches seem to have recovered some of their fading strength. They provided transcendental hope in years of tyranny, suppression, and destruction. To be sure, there have not been more martyrs among priests and ministers than among men and women inspired by social and political ideals. However, for a longer time than parties with definite political programs the churches could avoid the arena of political fight and refer to their supernatural and spiritual mission. When finally even they had to take a stand against the aggression of governments, they could, at least, not so easily be dissolved as the parties of the opposition.

Generally modern man, even if interested in religion, is no longer interested in theology. The varieties in the interpretation of the Holy Trinity or the Eucharist or the Laws no longer excite him to wage war on his neighbor. Whatever he may think about the relation of soul and body, he refuses increasingly to accept the promise of Heaven as a substitute for a normal measure of earthly happiness. With growing experience he becomes, so to speak, less and less dualistic; he wants to see earthly life and practice intertwined rather than separated.

Essentially, the interconnection between faith and social action has always been recognized by Christianity. Therefore the churches have expressed their ideas about liberalism and socialism, naturalism and supernaturalism, war and peace. But in the acute crises during the past centuries, rationalism has always triumphed over the universal claim of the Spirit. In addition, the churches have mostly taken a conservative, even reactionary, point of view. But things begin to change. There is more social idealism in certain divinity schools than in any other university department.

Though sometimes high ecclesiastics alienate people with good taste by their difficulty in differentiating spiritual lead-

ership from propaganda and Christian teaching from advertising, the fact remains that at present people listen to Christian leaders probably more than they did thirty years ago.

This now creates new and fateful responsibilities before the whole world.

Twice in its history the Christian Church has been confronted with great decisions which determined the future of civilization. Twice it failed: the first time in the Middle Ages when it arrogated to itself the spiritual and earthly power all in one, forced the governments to burn heretics, and meddled in the internal affairs of individual countries; the second time in the seventeenth century when it attempted to fetter the intellectual freedom of the scientists. While engaging in the first venture, the Church was unaware of the determination which lay in man's desire for national and individual independence. Thus it helped bring about exactly what it tried to avoid, a rebellion of protesting sects and the final split of the Western Church. In the seventeenth century and later, the Church arrogated to itself the role of the arbiter in matters of science. It failed to recognize the power in man's intellectual curiosity and search for empirical truth. Thus it caused the rift between the religious and the scientific consciousness of modern man. Yet, in both cases it imagined that it defended a sacred against a sinful principle: in the first case the unity of Christendom and the apostolic tradition, in the second case the philosophical unity of Aristotelianism and the Biblical revelation.

Today religion is inevitably involved in the struggle of the Western nations against Communism. The situation is of frightening complexity—of the same complexity as in the Middle Ages and the seventeenth century.

Organized religion has the right, even the duty, to protest against any anti-religious movement or institution which threatens to influence man's conscience by means of organized propaganda or legislation. There is, of course, the undeniable fact that the various Christian churches themselves, when in power, did not hesitate to use mental pressure or the power of governments against supposed heretics. even if they were profoundly religious. Only with distress can one read today certain papal encyclicals against the heresy of democracy, or learn about the politics of German Protestantism against progressive social movements—all this not in the seventeenth, but in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

But sins of the past cannot prevent a person or an institution from acting in the present and caring for the future. It is exactly the lessons from history, however, which should make the representatives of religion cautious against the temptation to mix, consciously or unconsciously, vested interests with truly religious motives. Nothing has hurt religion more than mistakes of this kind. And with growing enlightenment among the populace today more than ever the clergy will be looked at with diffidence exactly by those it wants to convince if they are suspicious that there are ulterior motives behind the heroic gesture. This suspicion has split off from the established churches first the liberal and then the socialist movements of the European continent. Also in our day religious doctrine will be powerless in face of the great issues unless it dares reveal the good or the evil in whatever political or economic system it may appear.

Human institutions err even if they feel God-inspired, just as individuals sometimes mistake their merely subjective intuitions for the voice of God. Hence, wherever the principles of Christianity seem to conflict with political movements, let it never be forgotten that the study of

eology or belief in a dogma creates ex-
rtship in social problems just as little
politics or the master of laboratory
ethods justifies any claim to judge com-
ex issues of religion and philosophy.

How much clearer would the role of
e churches in adult education and our
hole cultural situation be if those clergy-
en who dare free their denominations
t only from political involvements but
so from old superstitions found more
pport among their colleagues. It is not
e cult and the ritual which do harm to
ganized religion—on the contrary, they
e necessary implements. What does harm
ong those who otherwise should be the
ading laymen in their churches is the
eral and magical rather than the sym-
lical interpretation of cult and dogma.
here are many prayers, practices, and
rmons which do not really elevate the
ind of man toward the Holy, but either
ep him for his whole life in a state of
ental infantilism or cause him to rebel
hen he suddenly discovers the anthropo-
orphic and superstitious qualities of his
rly religious influences. Only if the
urches combine political with intellec-
al integrity can they help modern man
become mature and thus remain one
the great factors in adult culture. They
ust not put dogma above the honest
oughts and deeds of man; they must
ankly acknowledge and help to fight old
conomic and political evils even if they
slike radical cures and the philosophies
hind them; and they must not mistake
mantic insincerities for religious rever-
ce. Man has always tested ideas not
nly by what they say, but by how they
ork.

EASTER

Easter is not so much an historic event as an experience in the life of all men of every age and place. There is no people, be they the dust covered child-like races of the hoary past or the eager tip-toe-poised sons of today, but that has its Festival of Renewal. Older than Christianity is the feeling within the human heart, born out of a universal instinct, of there being an infinite Renewal, an eternal Spring, a perpetual Sunrise at the heart of the world. Varied have been the festivals and symbols men have employed to make vivid and intelligent this all encompassing fact about life. Soul-ful and enchanting have been the sacred dramas in which man has sought to portray his illusive feelings; sublime and hope-enthralling have been his holy rituals through which he has entered into that mystery which is too profound for words. Evermore has he seen his loved ones vanish on a forlorn march of dust; and while his eyes were yet misty with tears spring came tripping from the south again, incanting the earth with witchery and subduing his longing heart with wonder.

Thus, Easter is a blend of the far-flung mysteries of nature, and the deep surging mysticism of religion; the one an observed fact of the ever-whereness of nature, the other man's noblest interpretation of what the heart feels must be true. Therefore, we have a right to live as though there is a bridge of sunset bars which leads into a day that shall endless be!

O man of the singing hope, look up into the heavens pebbly with stars; look out upon the kneeling hillsides pregnant with budding life; look deep within your wistful soul, hear its soft murmurs of cosmic voices, and lo, thou shalt find assurance that at the Heart of the World there is a perpetual Easter, eternally proclaiming a many-tongued gospel of Triumph!

W. Waldemar W. Argow.

THE EASTER PROMISE

by

Felix Arnold
Leader, Arkansas Society of Unitarians
Little Rock, Arkansas

Our Easter is the Christian version of a spring festival held in honor of the Anglo-Saxon goddess of spring, *Eostre.* In every age men have seen in the coming of spring a symbol of the life force of the universe which never dies. As Easter originated before Christianity, so did the theological dogma associated with Easter—the resurrection of the dead. That idea come into Christianity from older religions, the Egyptian, the Persian, and others. Likewise the idea of a god-man or savior. In each of several pre-Christian religions the central figure was a divine lord, a supernatural being who had died and risen from the grave. His death and resurrection was celebrated each year.

To the pagan resurrection myths Christianity added ethical values symbolized in the life of Jesus of Nazareth: human integrity, human compassion and love, and the infinite worth of human personality. Christian theologians, when they deified Jesus and proclaimed him a supernatural savior, were expressing indirectly, symbolically, "humanity's deep longing for freedom from tyranny, oppression and fear." Easter is a reminder of the deathless character of the Nazarene, as of all righteous men.

As liberals, we do not believe that Jesus "still lives on in a physical sense somewhere off in a gold-plated heaven." We believe, rather, "that he still lives creatively, gloriously in the hearts of men."

Myth and myth-making did not cease, as it did not begin, with the deification of Jesus of Nazareth. New myths constantly arise. For example, the infallible Pope of the Roman Church is a modern myth. So too is the exalted and inspired leader, the Fuehrer of Nazi Germany. We might mention figures even in American history who have assumed mythical significance, and ridiculous as the idea may seem, we must not forget Superman of the movies, radio and comics. He is pure myth. So it really is not strange that Jesus of Nazareth, a man, became Jesus Christ, a god.

All myths are the invention and expression of the poetic nature of man. The Christian Easter with its resurrection story is sublime poetry; as such, beautiful and significant, symbolical of the historical fact that "Truth crushed to earth shall rise again."

The resurrection story is symbolical also of a psychological fact, "That men may rise on stepping stones of their dead selves to higher things." This is the spiritual promise of Easter: our lives will be transformed if we die to low and selfish aims. Our bodies die, but there is "a resurrection of the living spirit of man." In this sense, "resurrection can be understood * * * There is no miracle contrary to natural law in its fulfillment, only the verifiable miracle of human personality, expressed as love, justice, good will, and nobility!"

Says Dr. Albert E. Ribourg, "We are always dying and being born again, into better and larger spheres, always failing that we may succeed, always submitting that we may conquer. Every living life is a continuous resurrection."

In the words of Rabbi Stephen S. Wise, "The crucifixion and resurrection are not single or singular events which befell one Jew 1,900 years ago. They are symbols of the life and hope of the human race in its upward march forever."

YOUTH THOUGHTS ON EASTER

by

by Charles DeB. Allen
Unitarian Church, Sanford (Maine).

Just what does the resurrection of Jesus ally mean? Have you ever experienced e feeling of death in your family? fter a loved one has passed on from us, e experience an empty, futile feeling r many hours, the second day especial-. We feel that a light has gone from ur lives that will never shine again and we experience a day or two of darkness. fter we have passed through this period despair about the third day a new hope mes into our hearts. We begin to re-ember the kindness and love shown to s and remember the kindness and love e have shown to our loved one. And a-in the personality traits begin to re-ppear and shine for us again.

Jesus' disciples must have had these me experiences and these same feelings ter the death of their master and teach-upon the cross. For two days a period darkness, futility, loss and despair be-ll them. Then on the third day, the ay of resurrection, the day we have come call Easter, as the day of new life in ll of nature, a reawakening of faith, a ebirth of hope that such a loved one ould not truly be dead, that such a power-l personality that was His could not so asily be disposed of or cast away to othingness in the universe. Somewhere some way such a personality must be oing on and must and always will con-nue to exist. "He is not dead but he has isen" rings again in our hearts. Easter the celebration of the eternal hope ever resent with us that life goes on and on —that He couldn't truly die.

When I look upon a radio and listen to broadcast of beautiful misic, I know hat if the radio cabinet were destroyed he beautiful music would still be coming over the air waves into the room. The breaking of the box or cabinet in no way would destroy the intangible, invisible waves of music that must always be in the room whether the radio box is actually there or not. So, too, with the personality of Jesus, and so too with the personality of our loved ones. Though their physical body may be invisible, it still exists for us and is ever present with us, and didn't Jesus say: "For lo, I am with you always, even unto the end."

If a log is burned in the fire it seems to be destroyed, but you who have had chemistry, know that measure for measure, though the wood is changed in chemical composition and appearance to a charred mass, gases, and smoke, weight for weight all physical material even to the last ounce is preserved in another form. And so matter, though changed in form, is never destroyed.

If we look about us in the universe what seems to be the most important thing we see? Is it the minerals in the mountains? Is it the ocean beating on the shore; the grass; the flowers however beautiful; the trees? Or rather is it the lively little animals in our forest; some beautiful painting; a magnificent building? No, I think it is rather the great and powerful entity that is a human being; the great and powerful intangible something that makes a human soul. If our wood, our minerals—though changed through fire and pressure—cannot be utterly destroyed, how much less can such an important thing as the mind and soul of a human being be destroyed. Personality, then, must be the essence of eternity.

And so the power of Jesus' personality is with us today as much as when he lived in physical form. If we have in our hearts and minds a receptor, a receiving set as in our radio, we can likewise absorb the rays of His thought and personality just as our little radio picks up the music on the airways emanating in the distance.

He lives forever and so we, too, must live forever. The soul of man is everlasting, an eternal power in the universe.

PRAYER—AFTER EASTER

Almighty Father, in whose will is our peace: we thank thee for the fidelity of our Master who did not fail in life's supreme test. Give us grace to make thy will our own, and courage to go forward, obedient unto thee, whatever thou dost command. Grant us the spiritual vision which filled the mind of our Master, and may we share his faith in Life's creative power.

Help us, O God, to lift up our eyes from the symbol of mortality, and to set our hearts upon the life which knows no end, thy life within us. Help us to pray with a living faith that thy kingdom may come in the earth, and thy will be done among men as it is in the heavens. And may no earthly tragedy shake that radiant faith.

O thou who art the Eternal Creator: we thank thee for the endless renewal of life. Give us the high purpose which lifts life to deathless quality. May we live, even now, the life which is eternal. Grant that we be risen with Christ and may set our hearts upon the things which are everlasting.

O God, who didst appoint thy Church to be a witness of eternal things in the midst of time: revive the purity of our faith and increase the power of our testimony. Grant us the consciousness of the presence of the Spirit of the Eternal God within our spirits. Give us the serenity which comes of knowing that, if our earthly house be dissolved, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. AMEN.

"We human beings have some hard lessons to learn. They will not be easy to learn, but we can learn them. We must learn above all the first lesson that all the earth needs to know: that Christianity, democracy, and sanity, all three, center in love and brotherhood, in a sharing of a common humanity, in making room on this earth for all to live on it in human dignity and with self-esteem; in making room in our own hearts for understanding, love, and simple decency."

(Lillian Smith in "The White Christian and His Conscience.")

Noon Day Services
IN
King's Chapel

March 11-14:
DEAN CHESTER B. EMERSON, D. D.,
The General Theological Seminary,
New York

March 18-21:
REV. HARRY B. SCHOLEFIELD,
First Unitarian Church, Philadelphia

March 25-28:
REV. F. GERALD ENSLEY, D. D.
North Broadway Metohdist Church,
Columbus

April 1-4:
REV. VIVIAN T. POMEROY, D. D.,
First Parish, Milton

April 7-11:
Holy Week
DR. PALFREY PERKINS

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THE PAEAN OF VICTORY!

by

Rev. W. Waldemar Argow, Th. D.
Minister, First Unitarian - Universalist Church
Baltimore, Maryland

"Speak, History! Who are Life's victors? Unroll thy long annals and say" what has triumphed more often—life or death? wrong or evil? peace or war? health or disease? joy or sorrow? pleasure or pain? love or hate? Forever is there some relentless concern over the least that interferes with the achievements of the better and the best. Were it not so the earth that interferes with the achievements of the and the best. Were it not so the earth and all man's fair works would have been destroyed aeons ago. Man is no transient visitor who came to this earth from some great outside. He came from the heart of Life; he is bone of its bone, flesh of its flesh and spirit of its spirit. Since man is Life, and Life is eternally victorious, he cannot be defeated or destroyed. 'Tis true that forms and symbols which express this increasing victory change and dissolve; but that eternal Life of which they are the expression emerges in a great splendor.

What an exhilarating assurance—that at the heart of birth and death is victorious Life! And not merely Life as a vague impersonal mass or force, but Life with a will and a purpose, and a relentless concern for each of its children! Evermore, is there Someone who cares, who comforts, inspires and challenges. Why then be afraid of the unknown morrow and the baffling events of today? Is it not thrilling to know there is an invisible out-stretched Hand at every turn of the road?

O frail child of the dust, yet mighty son of eternity, why be afraid? You are Life itself, unfathomable, unconquerable, supreme, tremendous! Death is your humble servant, not master. Since you are Life how can you die? And since death is your servant why fear your helper? Lift high your head; fling wide your hopes; dare greatly; grasp heroically the reins of destiny, and with one mighty leap of the heart cry in exaltation that all the world may hear—I am not afraid! Thus, and thus only shall you celebrate your resurrection on this day of victory!